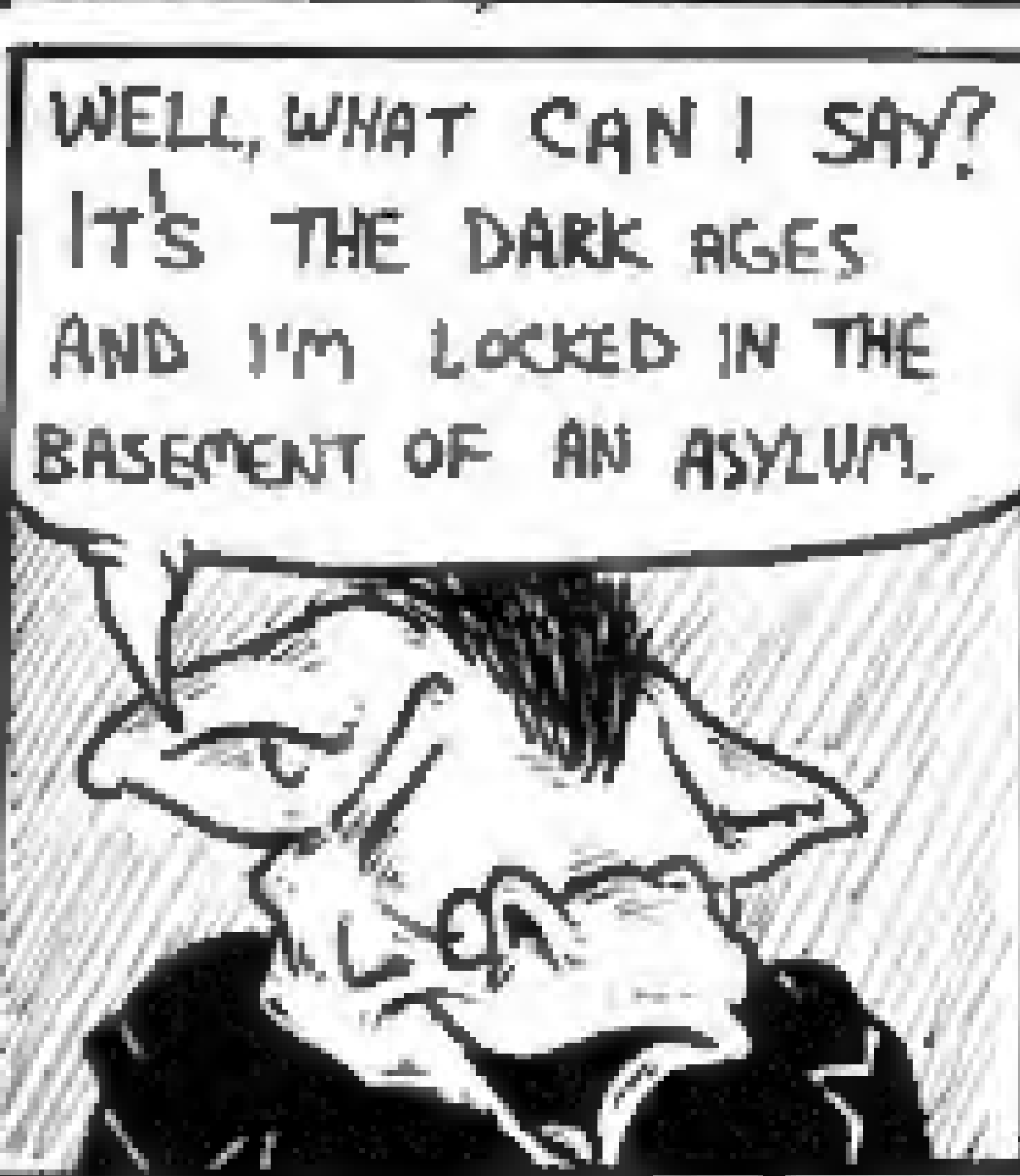




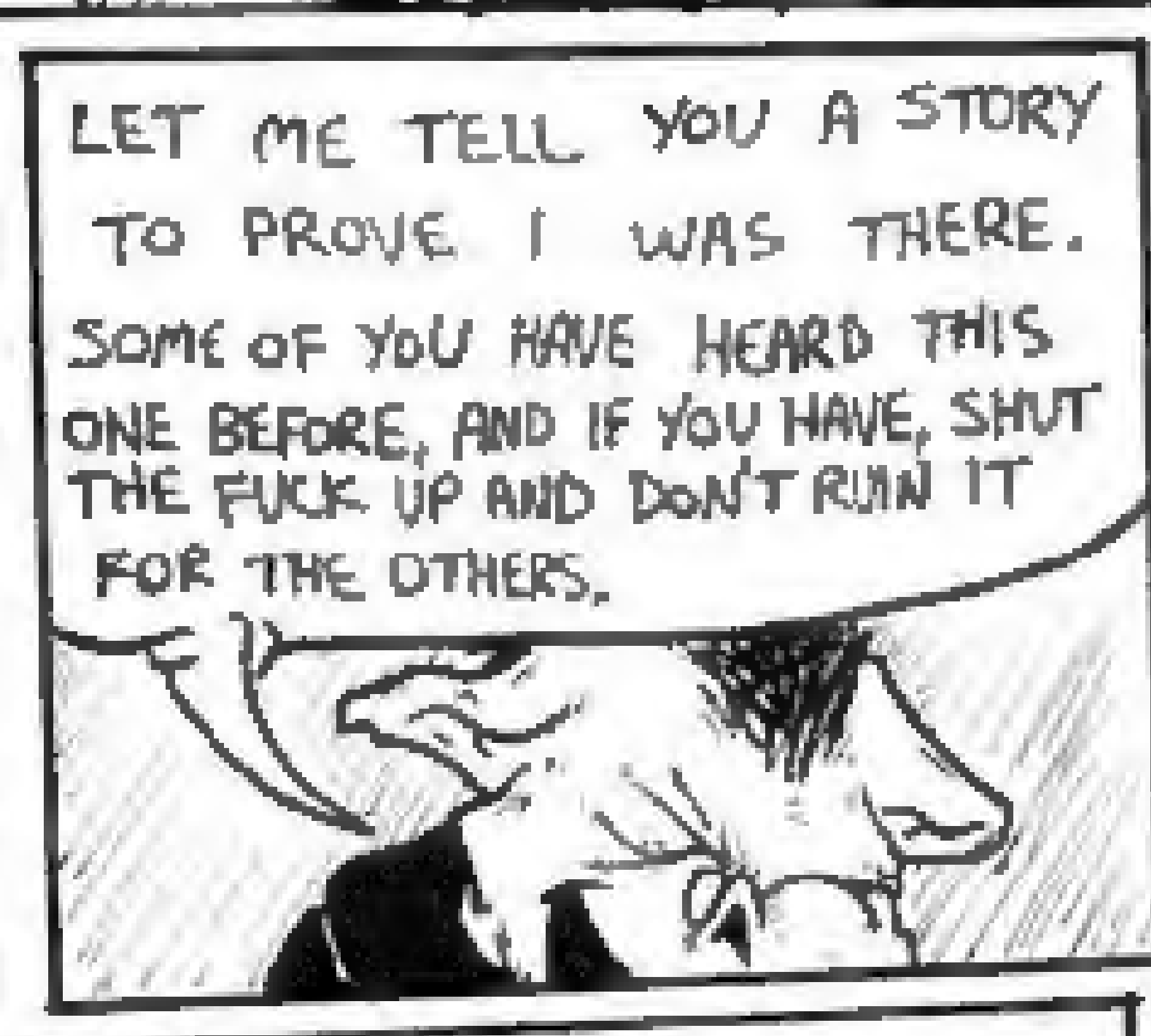
AH! DIDN'T NOTICE YOU,
USING THAT MAGIC WINDOW
AND ALL. A "MONITOR"
I BELIEVE?



WELL, WHAT CAN I SAY?
IT'S THE DARK AGES
AND I'M LOCKED IN THE
BASEMENT OF AN ASYLUM.



AH, BUT HOW RUDE OF ME. MY
NAME IS NOSTRUM. I'VE BEEN
TO HELL AND BACK.



LET ME TELL YOU A STORY
TO PROVE I WAS THERE.
SOME OF YOU HAVE HEARD THIS
ONE BEFORE, AND IF YOU HAVE, SHUT
THE FUCK UP AND DON'T RUIN IT
FOR THE OTHERS.



PAHEM: ONCE UPON A TIME...

THERE WERE
THREE FARMERS...



WHOSE CROPS WERE FLAGUED
BY MURDER UPON MURDER OF
CROWS.



TO FIX THE CROW PROBLEM, A
SCARECROW WAS MADE.

HE NEEDS A
FACE.

SINCE WHEN ARE YOU
A FUCKING ARTIST?

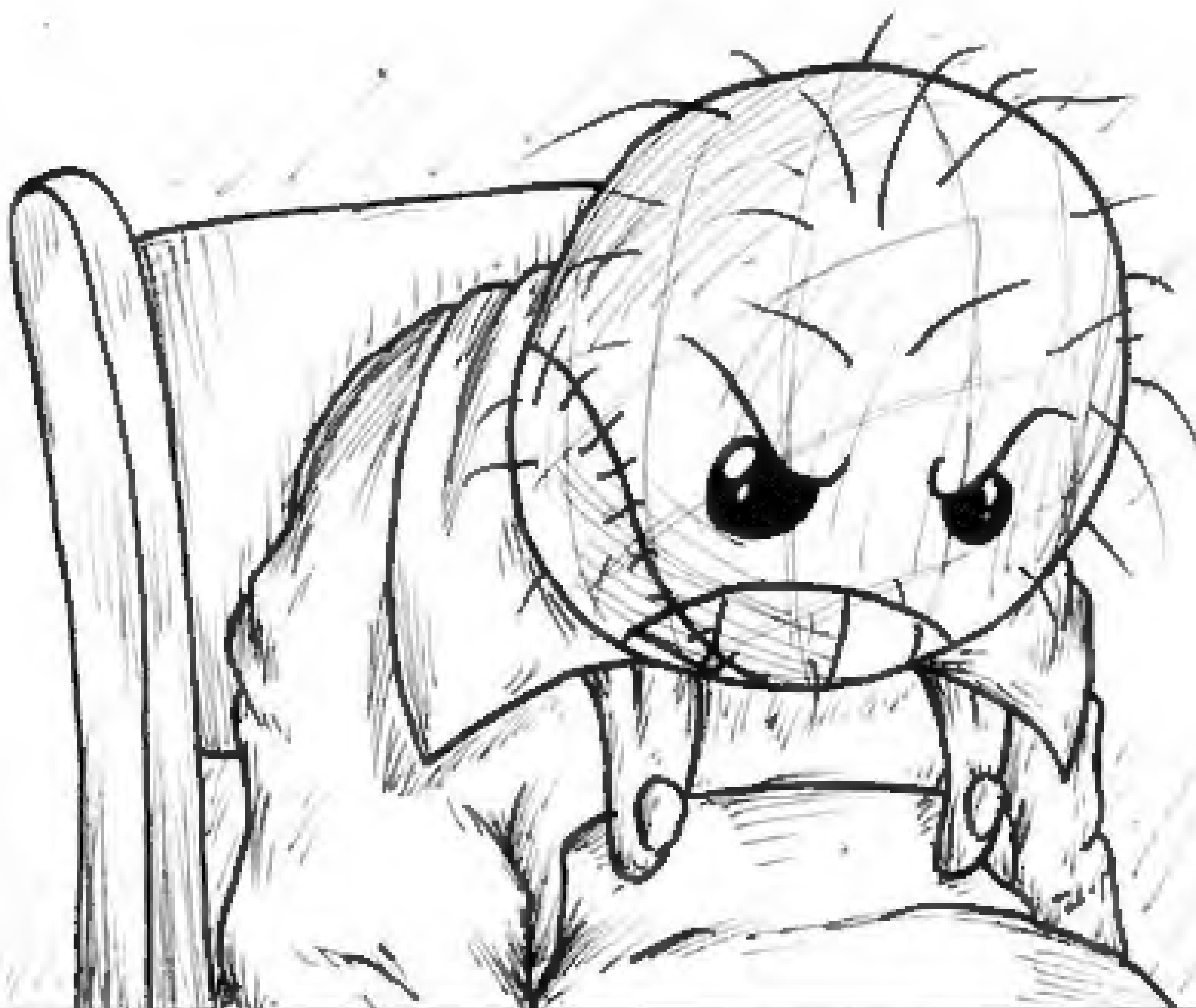
DONE! WHAT
DO YOU THINK?

HEY.... HE LOOKS
LIKE HAROLD!

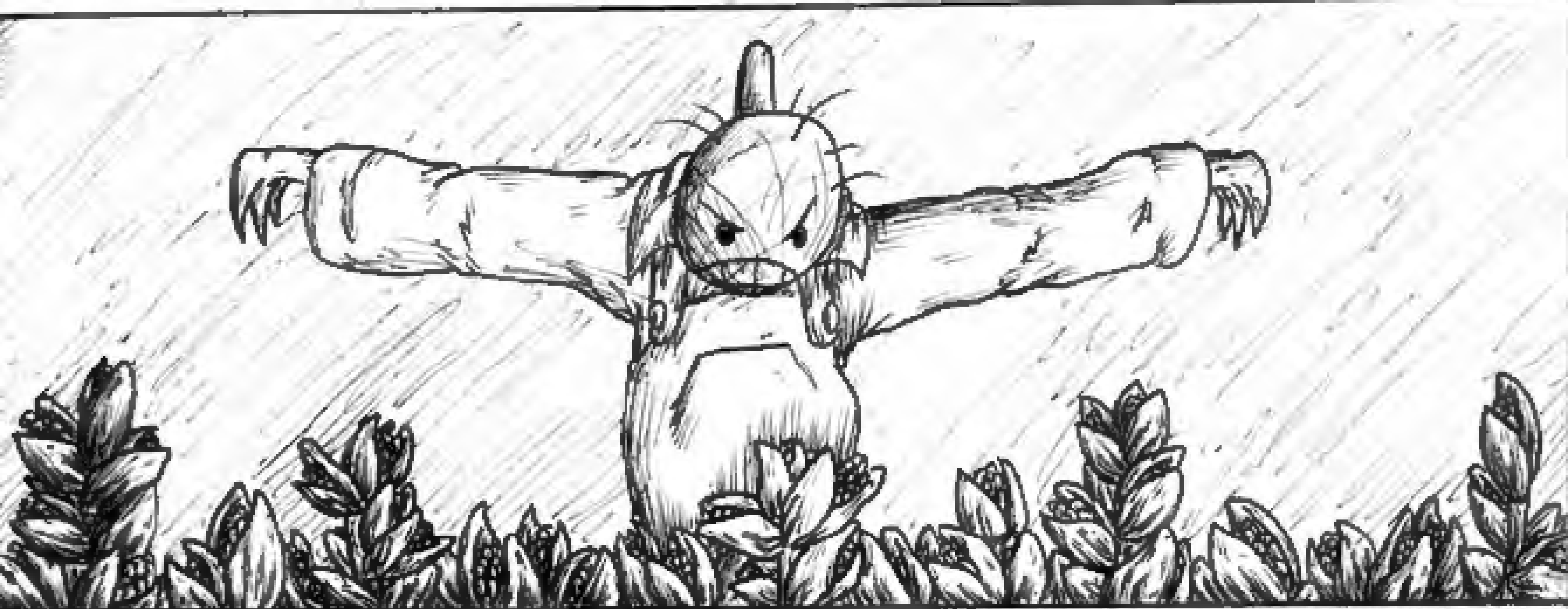
PFFT! YOU'RE RIGHT.... HEH,
FUCKING HAROLD.

YEAH.

OF COURSE, THE STUPID THING LOOKED NOTHING LIKE THEIR LONG-HATED
NEIGHBOR AND RIVAL CROP TENDER, BUT SOMEHOW THAT DIDN'T STOP THEM.



THEY USED TWO OLD RUSTY HOES (FOR ALL OF YOU FUNNYMEN, THAT IS THE FARMING EQUIPMENT) TO HOLD UP HIS ARMS AND THE STUCK HIM ON A POLE,



SO NIGHT FALLS...

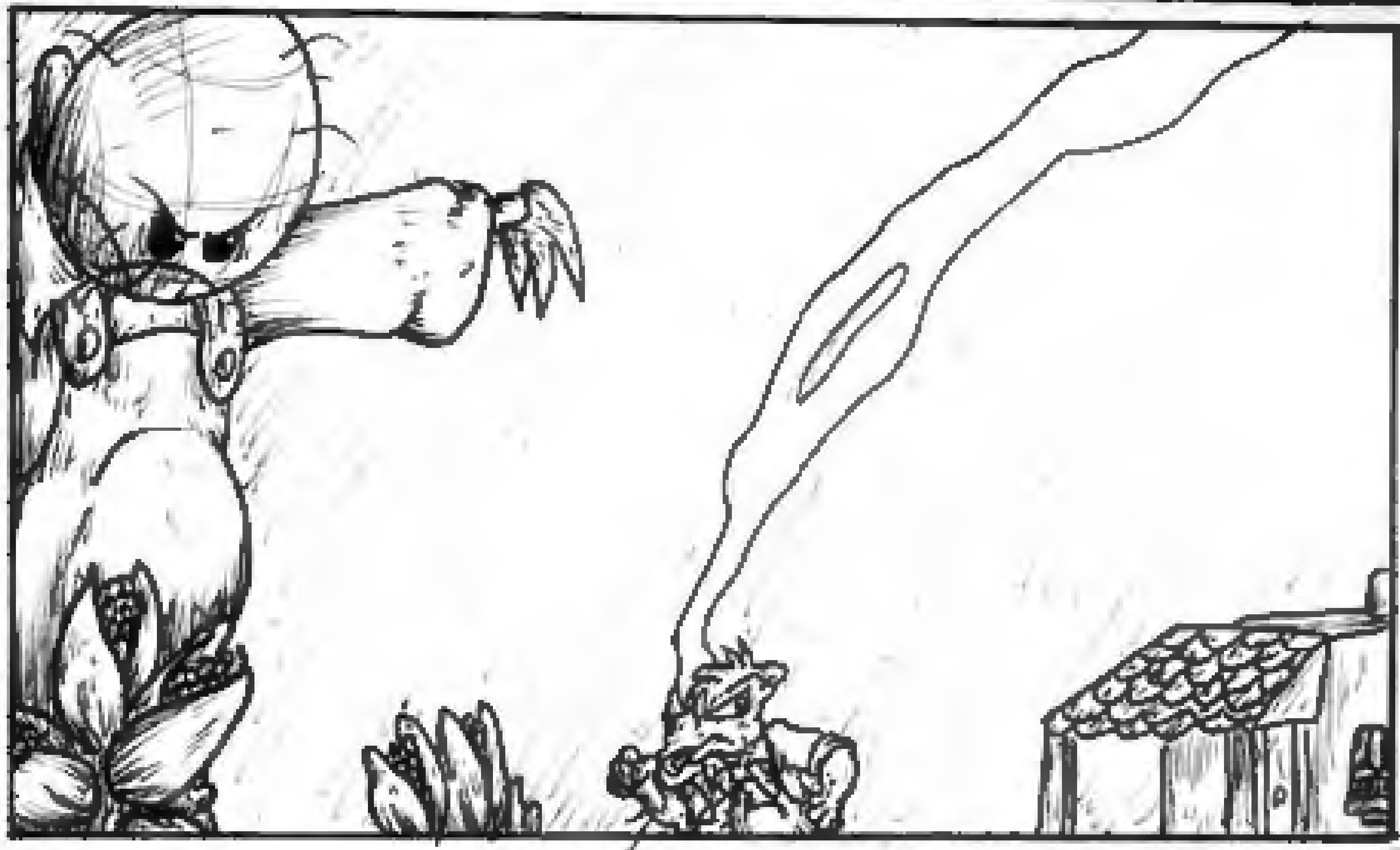


CHRIST, CAN'T YOU TWO DO THAT SOMEWHERE ELSE?!

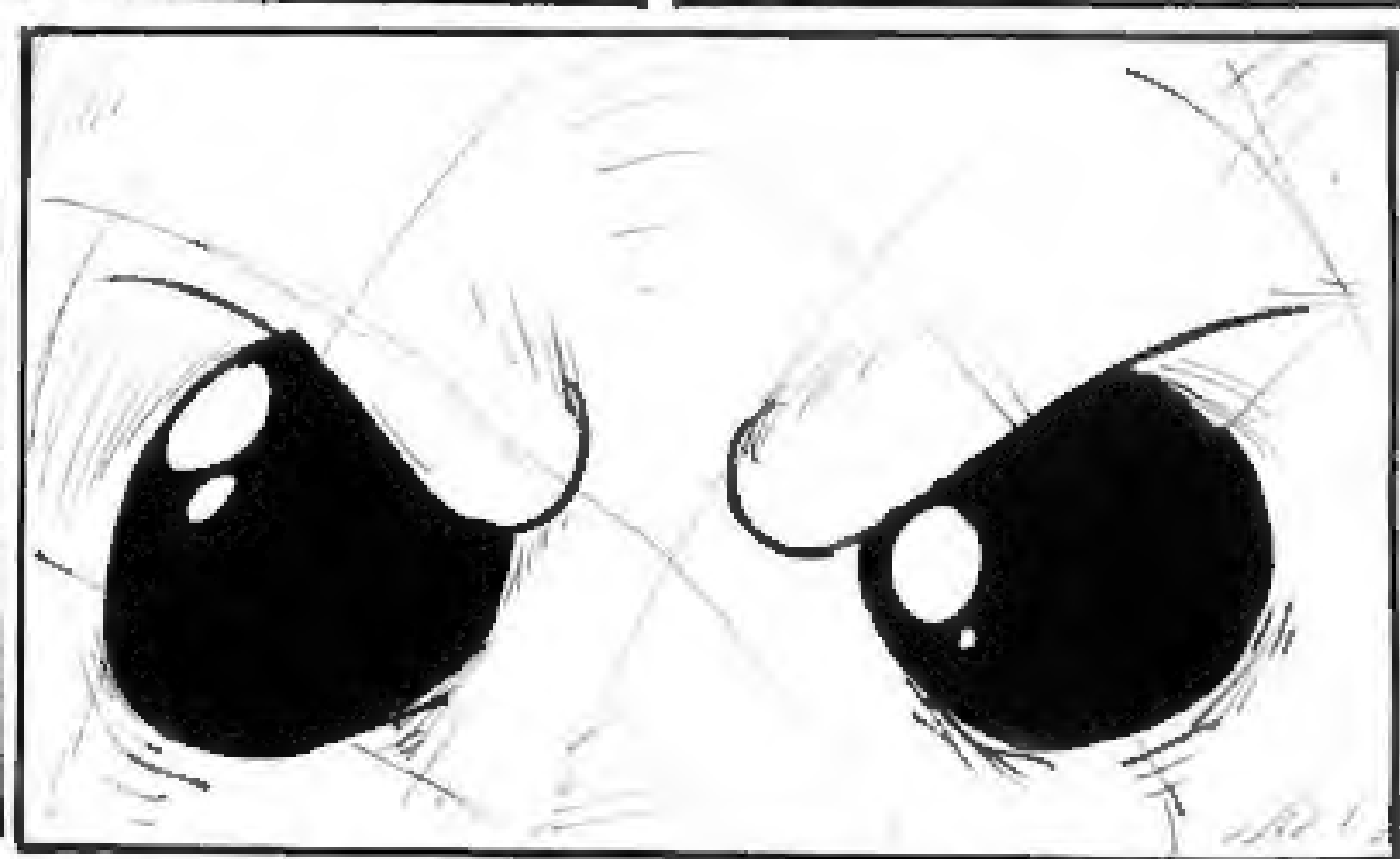
I MEAN, YOU HAVE A PERFECTLY GOOD BEDROOM TO FUCK IN!

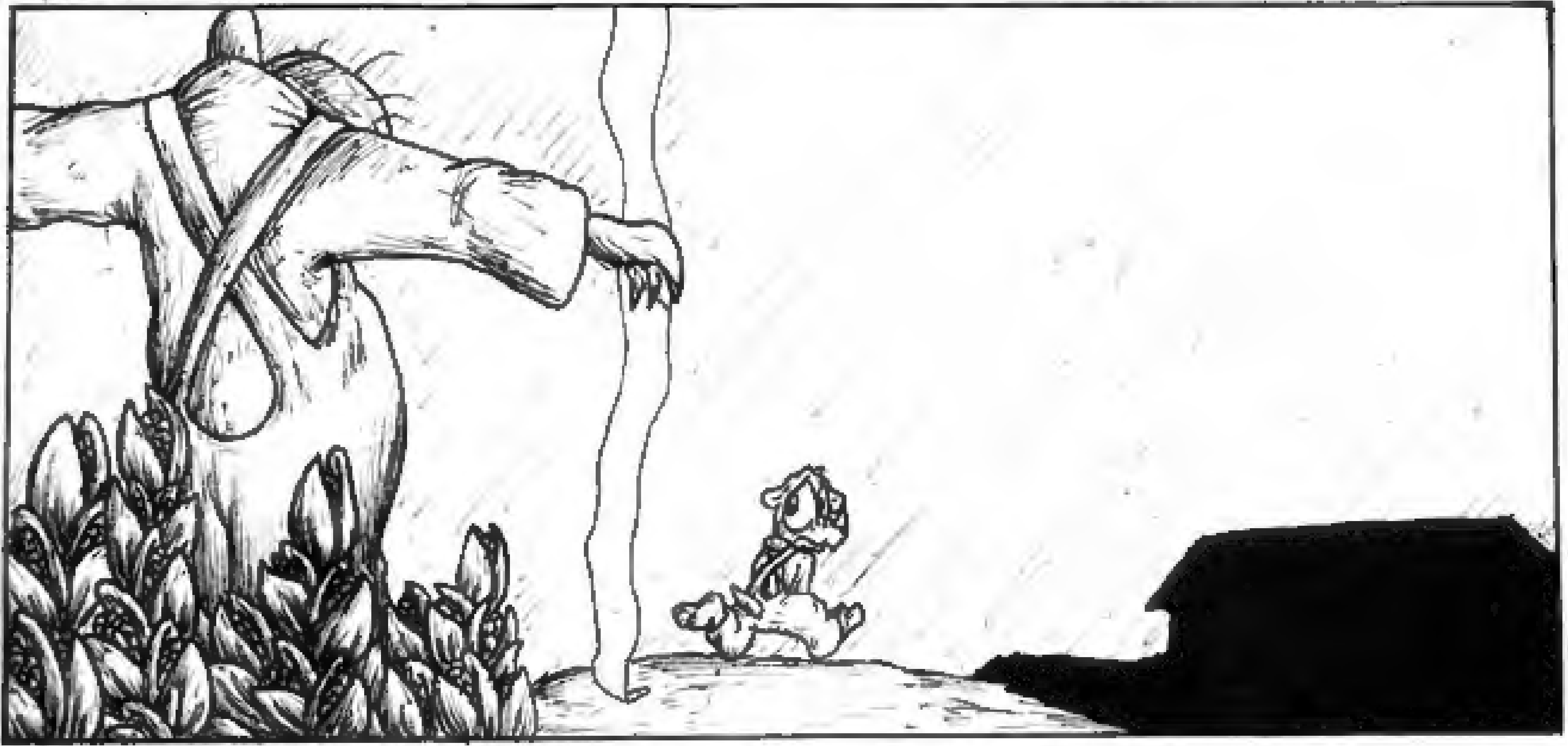
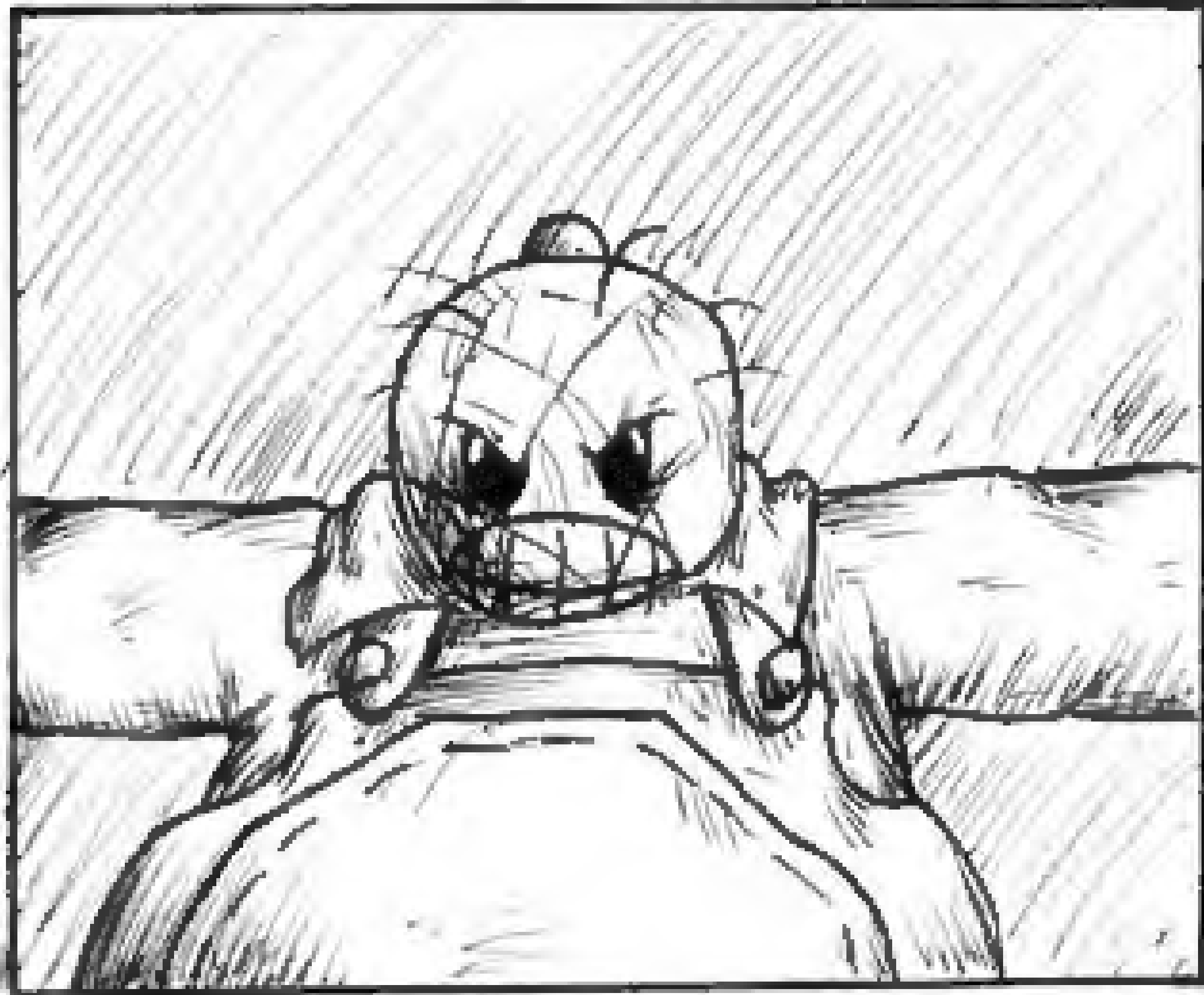


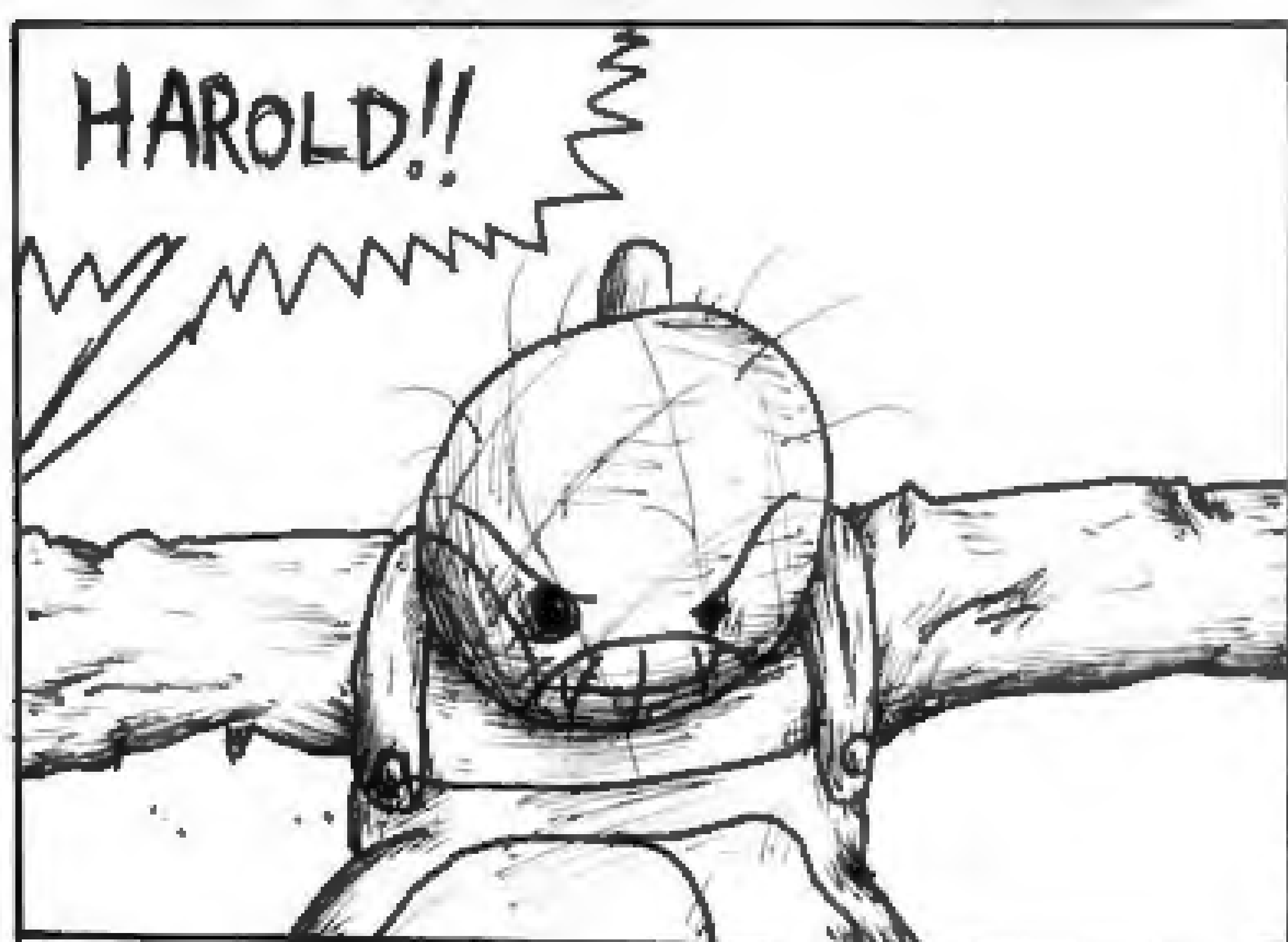
GET OUT OF HERE!!



FUCKING ASSHOLE...







HAROLD!!

WHAT IS THIS SHIT!!?



THIS IS BULL SHIT!

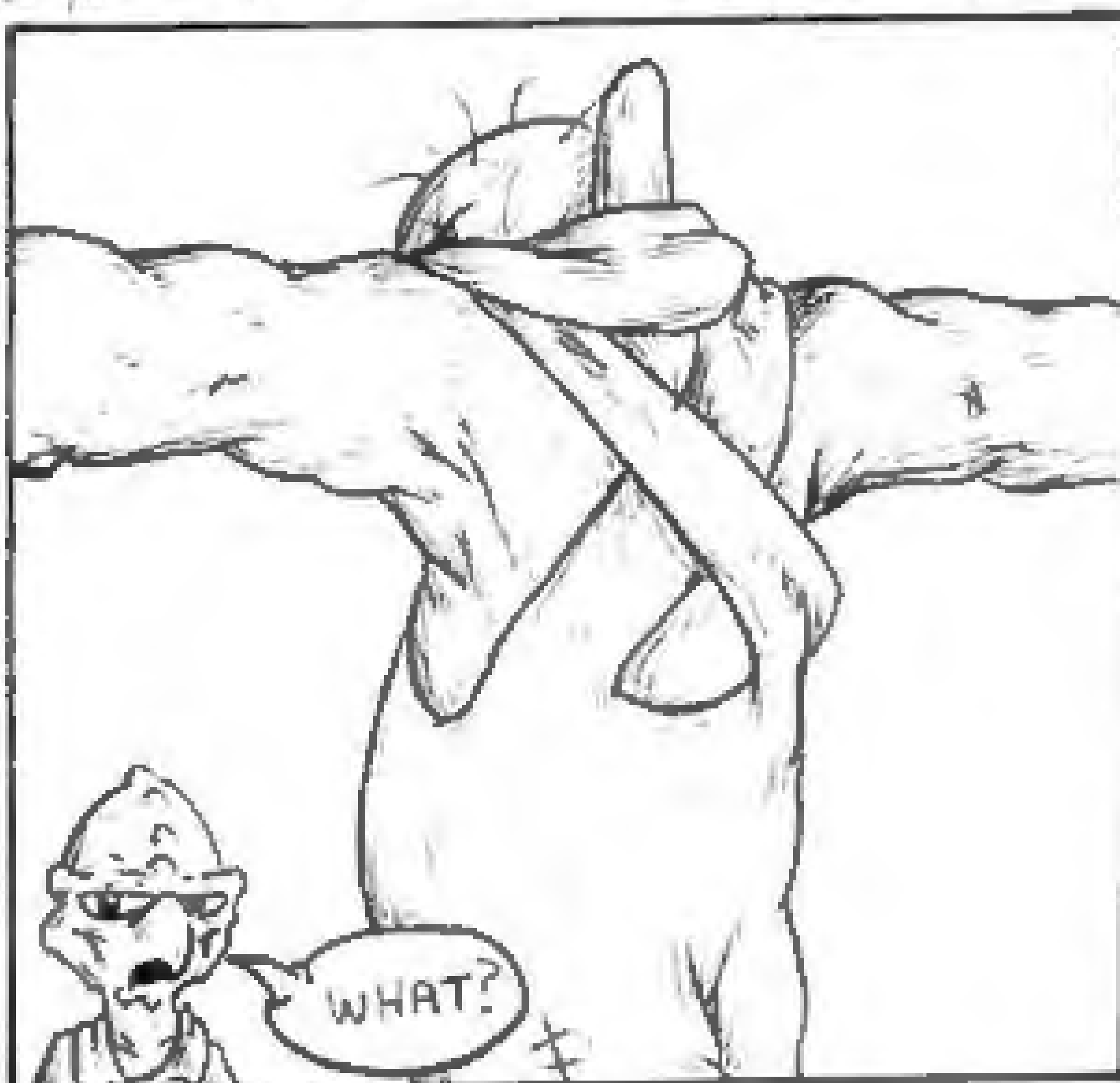


YOU BETTER START
DOING YOUR JOB OR
I'M GONNA BURN
YOU!

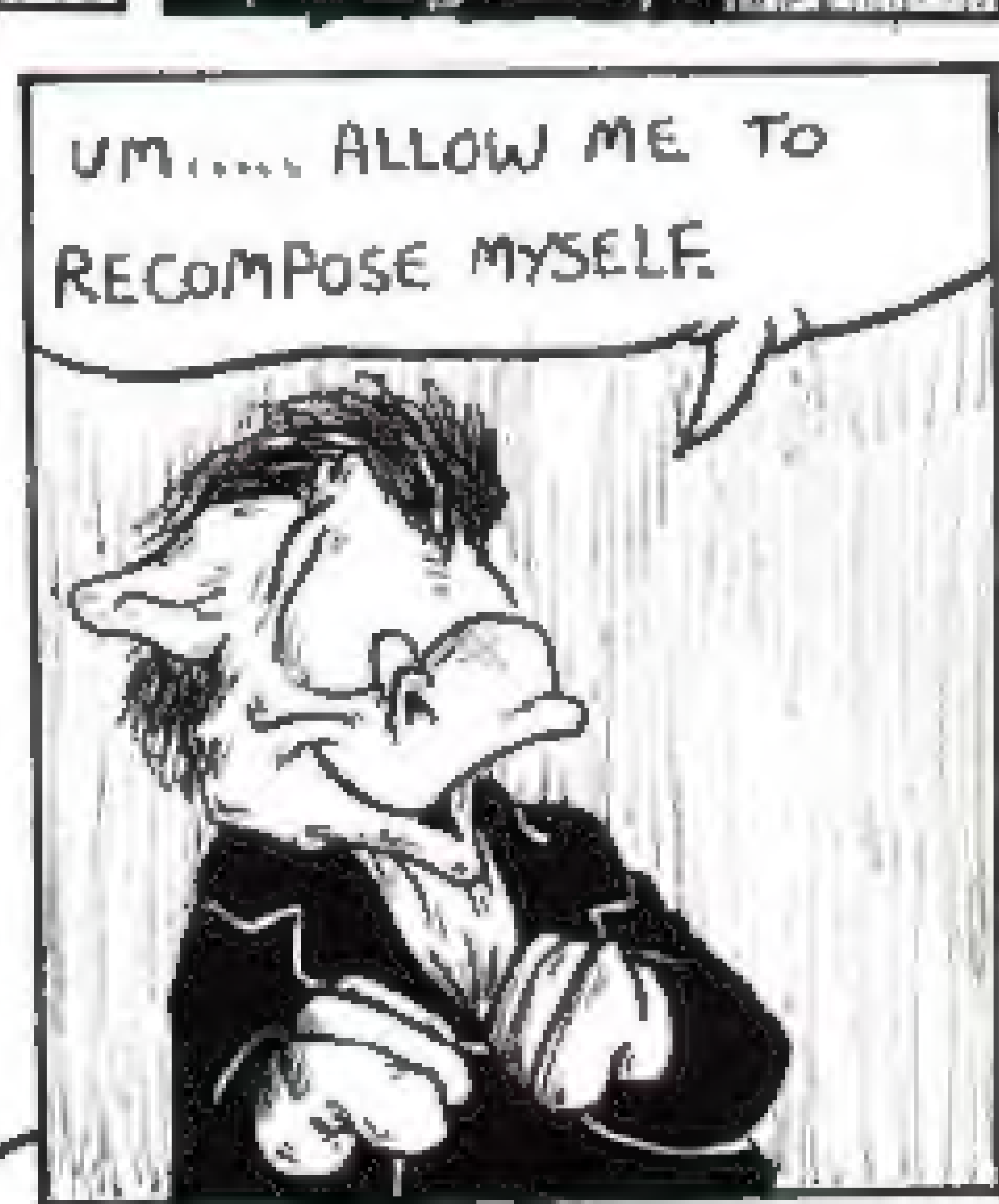


DO YOU
HEAR ME,
HAROLD?!









SO! WE'RE BACK!



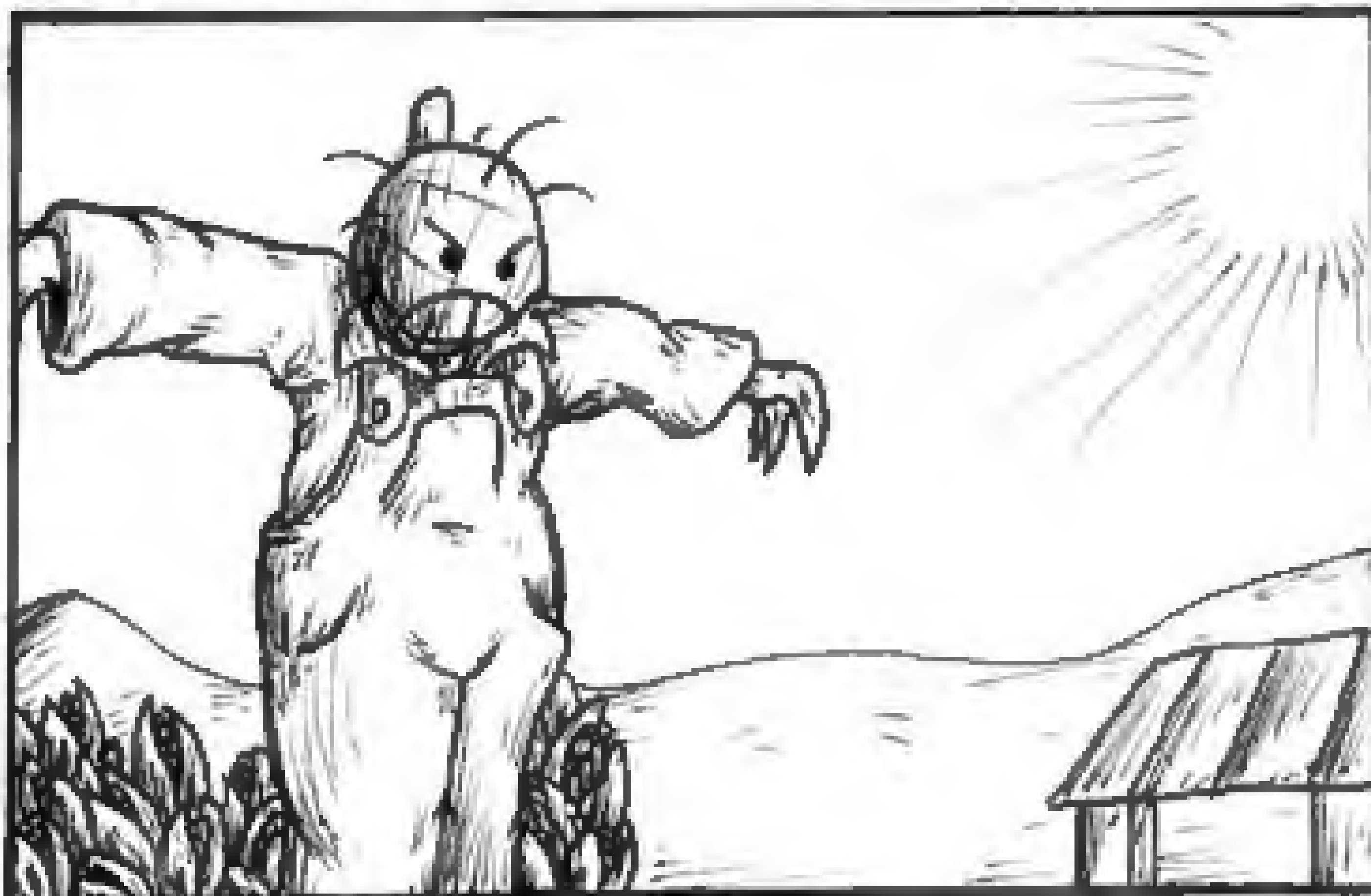
A WEEK WAS WAY TOO LONG TO BE AWAY FROM YOU LOVELY PEOPLE.



I REALLY COULDN'T STAND ONE MORE DAY AWAY.



WHERE DID WE -- AH, YES... THE LAST DAY.



WHAT THE HELL?!



THE CROWS... THEY'RE DEAD...?



WHAT THE FUCK IS--

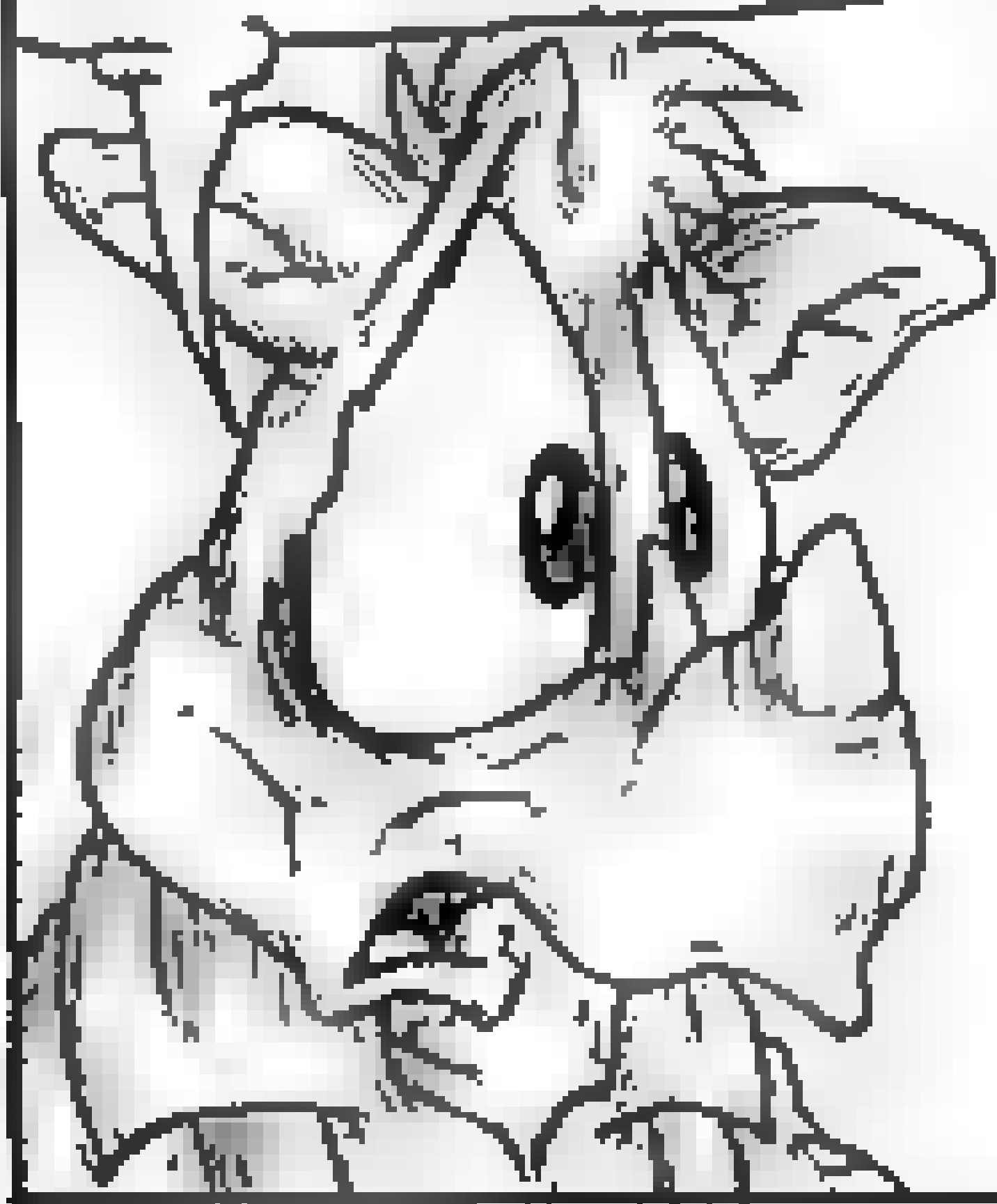
LISTEN, IT WAS HAROLD! YOU YELLED AT HIM ABOUT THE CROWS, SO--

THE FUCKING SCARE CROW DIDNT BUTCHER A FUCKTON OF GODDAMNED CROWS, ALL RIGHT?!

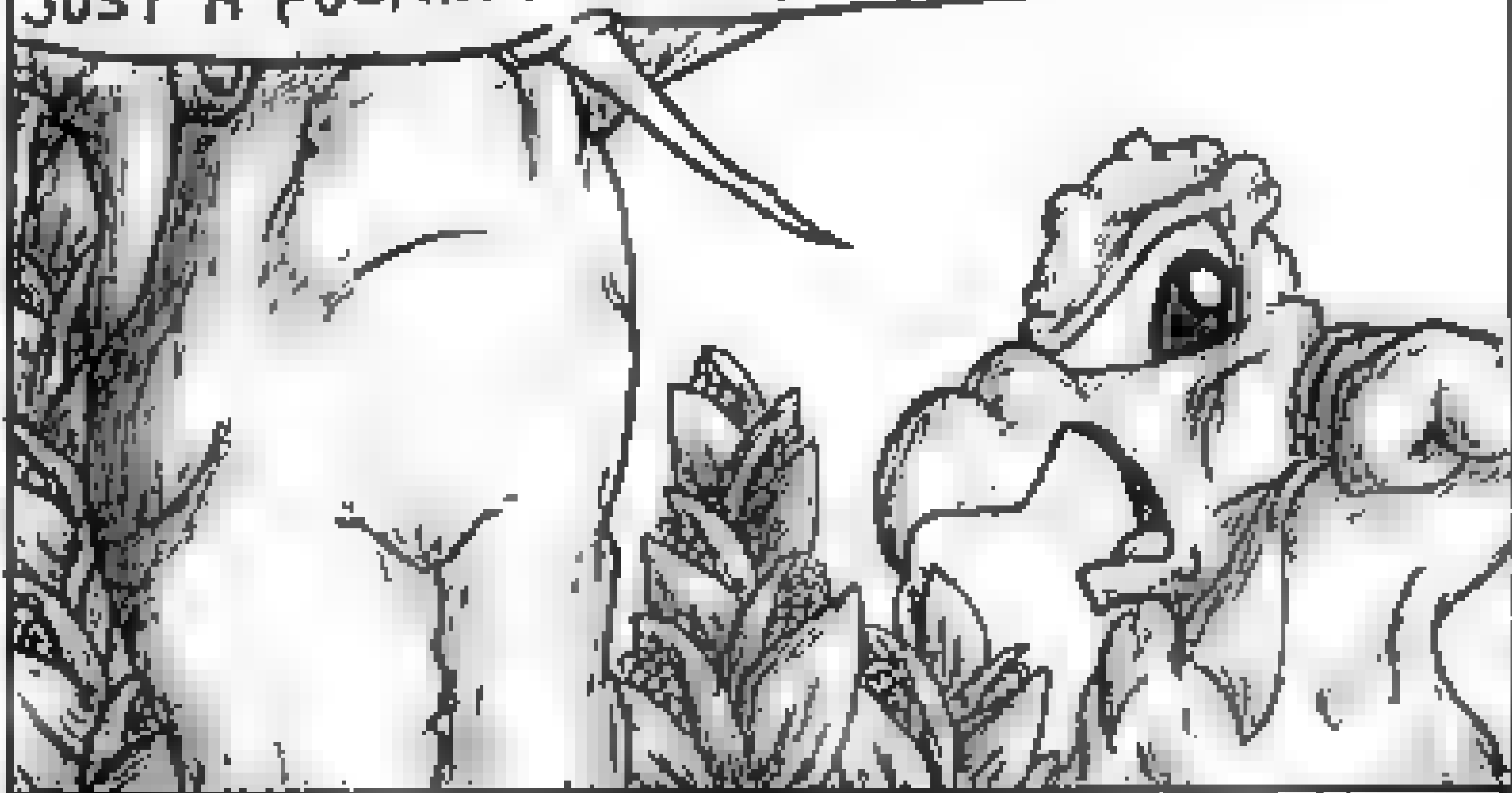
ITS TRUE...! I SAW HIM MOVE TOO. I--I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT HE LOOKED RIGHT AT ME.

YOU'RE BOTH DUMBSHITS! HAROLD IS A RAGDOLL. WE MADE HIM OURSELVES, OR DID YOU FORGET?!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

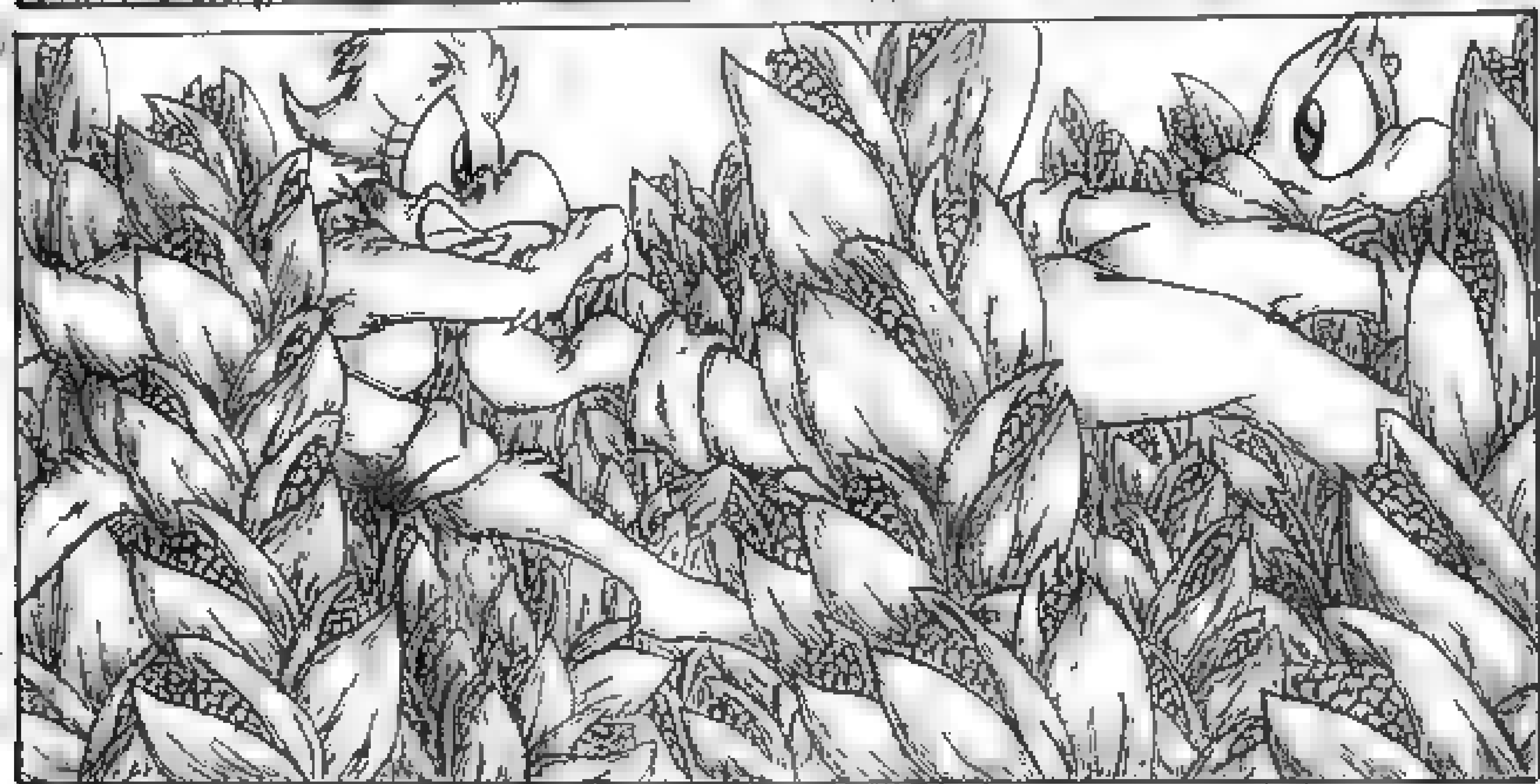
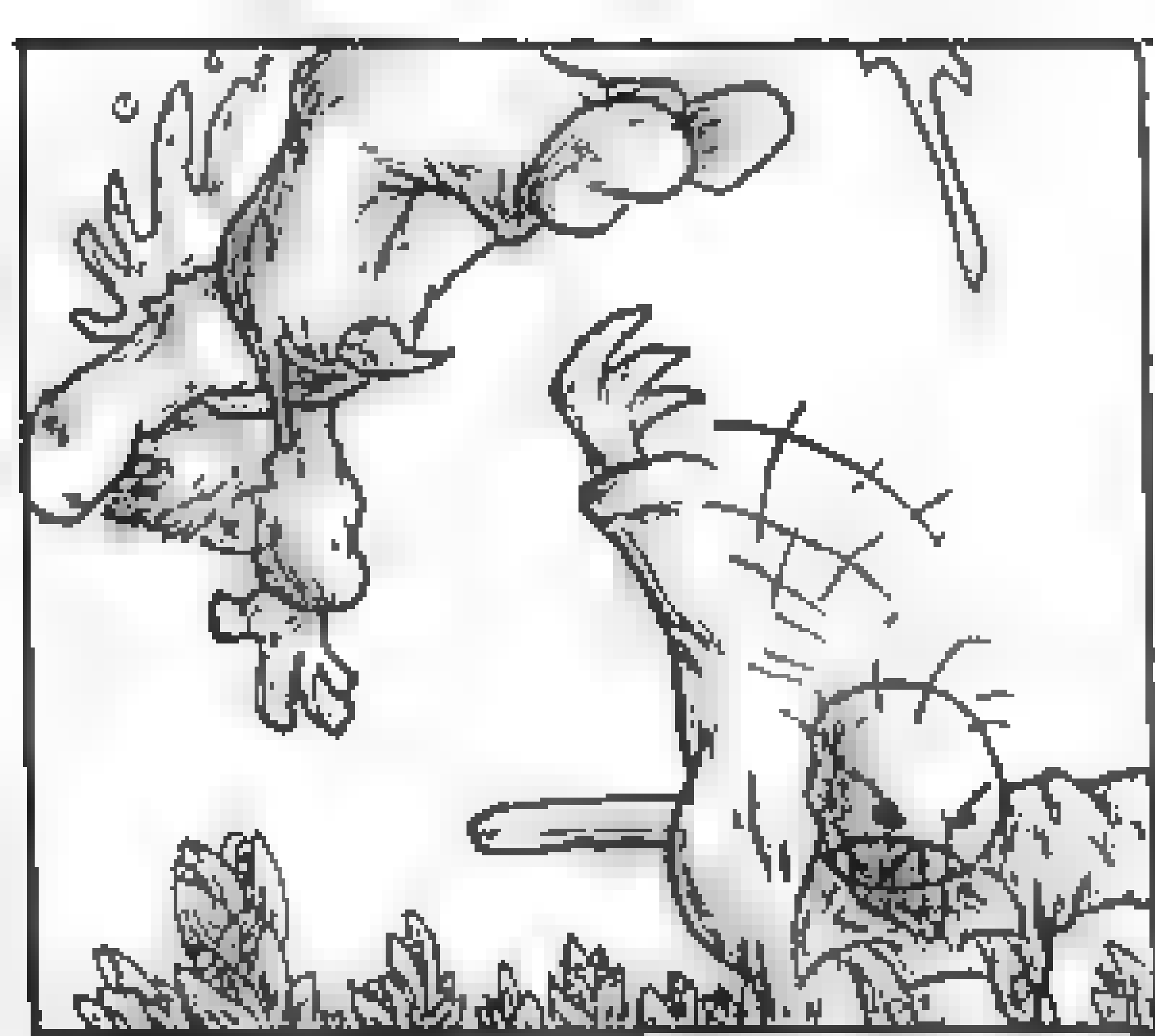


I'M GOING TO PUNCH THE SCARECROW IN THE NUTS, BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY I'M GOING TO GET THROUGH TO YOU HE'S JUST A FUCKING DOLL!



NO! NO, DON'T MAKE HIM MAD! HE —







THE FARMER DIDN'T STOP RUNNING
AND DIDN'T LOOK BACK UNTIL HE
WAS WELL OUT-OF-REACH.





AND SO HE RAN
AGAIN.



IT WAS MIDNIGHT WHEN HE
ARRIVED AT THE NEAREST TOWN. HE
RAN STRAIGHT FOR THE DOOR OF THE
TAVERN, HEARING THE PEOPLE WITHIN.
SURELY THERE WOULD BE PROTECTION
IN NUMBERS.



BUT...



WELL...

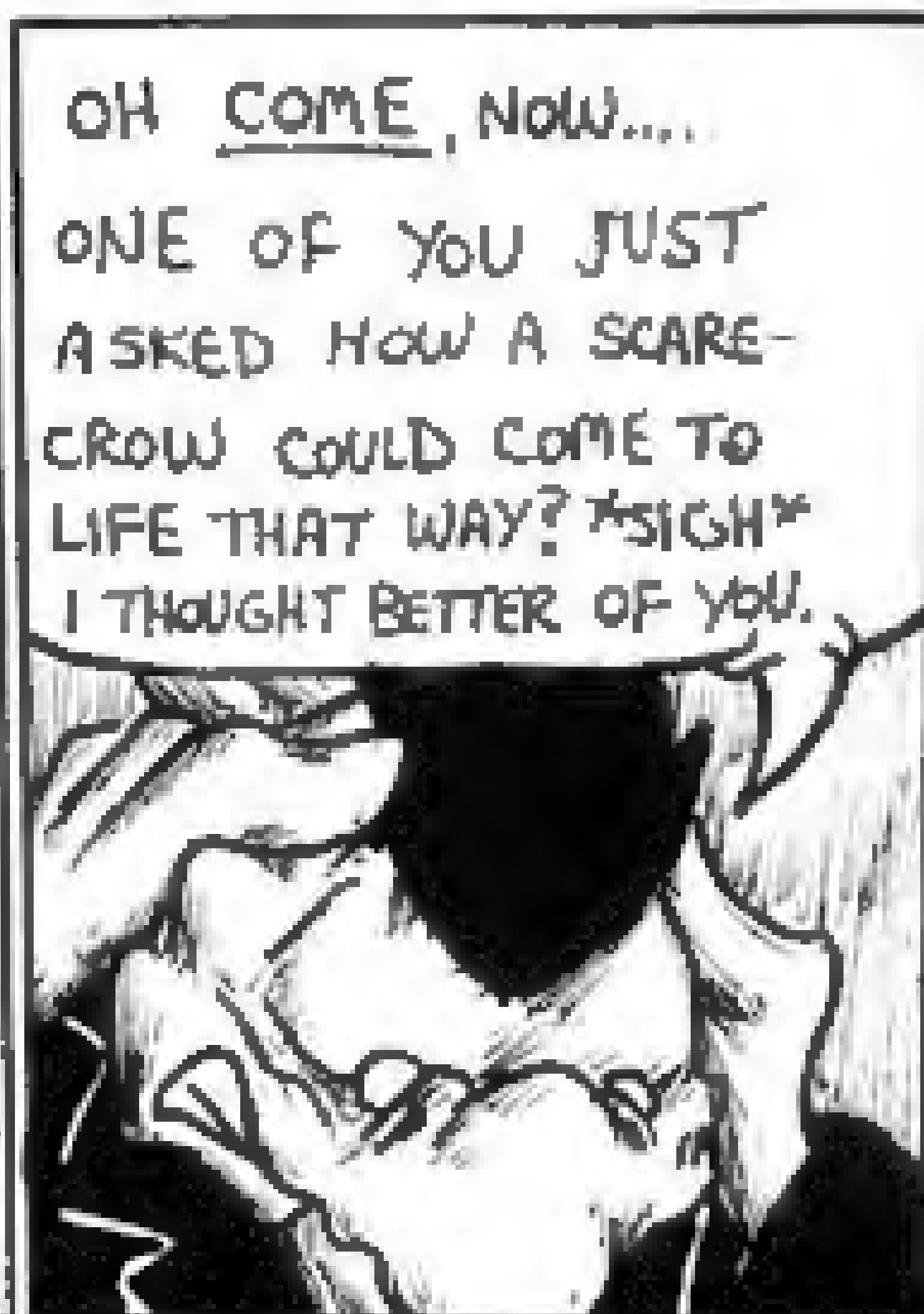




NOW! WASN'T THAT A HAPPY STORY?



I RATHER LIKED IT. IT HAD A VALUABLE MORAL, YOU SEE. "DON'T BE A DI-"



OH COME, NOW.... ONE OF YOU JUST ASKED HOW A SCARE-CROW COULD COME TO LIFE THAT WAY? *SIGH* I THOUGHT BETTER OF YOU.



BUT... VERY WELL. I'LL EXPLAIN. THERE ARE PLACES ON EARTH THAT HAVE BECOME POCKETS FOR RAW EMOTION. WHEN ENOUGH OF IT—PAIN, ANGER, FEAR, LUST—ALL ACCRUES IN ONE PLACE FOR LONG ENOUGH, IT WEAKENS THE BARRIER BETWEEN THERE AND HELL. AND SOMETIMES... WELL, SOMETHING CROSSES OVER. HAROLD WAS ONE OF THOSE "SOMETHINGS". THAT PISSANT LITTLE FARM WAS ONLY ONE OF THOSE PLACES, THOUGH. A BETTER-KNOWN ONE, FOR YOU ADVENTUROUS SORTS, IS A PLACE KNOWN AS THE CANNIBAL WOODS IN EUROPE. HOWEVER, I'M RAMBLING...

TO WHOMEVER JUST WONDERED WHAT BECAME OF THE FARM, DON'T WORRY. IT WILL HAVE A NEW OWNER SOON. ERM.... THOUGH BEST NOT ASK WHAT HE KEEPS IN HIS BARRELS.



HOW VERY INTERESTING, THOUGH, THAT IT ALL COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED HAD THE FARM NOT BEEN BUILT WHERE AN ASYLUM ONCE STOOD. THEY HOUSED THE WORST OF THEM THERE, YOU KNOW. THERE WERE EVEN TALES OF SOME MAD OLD KOOK WHO USED RAVE ABOUT HAVING BEEN TO HELL. THEY KEPT HIM BEHIND A GLASS WALL WHERE HE WOULD TELL HIS TALES TO ALL WHO WOULD LISTEN. I TELL YOU, SOME PEOPLE WILL BELIEVE ANYTHING.

TTFN

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1/30/05 01:25 PST